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FIRST YEAR OF AZ 211 HELPS MORE THAN 200,000

June 29, 2006 (Phoenix) - Today marks the one-year anniversary for Arizona 2-1-1 Online, a statewide source for emergency information as well as health and human service resources. More than 200,000 Arizonans have been helped by Arizona 2-1-1 in its first year.

"Arizona 2-1-1 has proven to be very valuable to Arizona residents and visitors in its first year of operation," said Frank Navarrete, Director of the Arizona's Office of Homeland Security. "With thousands of visitors viewing real-time updates during the Cave Creek Complex Fire, the Operation Good Neighbor response to Hurricane Katrina and the recent Brins Fire, it's clear that Arizonans are choosing to rely on this powerful tool."

Arizona 2-1-1 Online is the first system of its kind in the nation to provide timely information during natural or human-caused emergencies and disasters, such as wildland fires, floods, water shortages and public health emergencies. Multiple agencies responding to a single disaster each have critical information to share. This information is posted in a single location, making Arizona 2-1-1 Online an effective one-stop shop for official information.

During the Brins Fire in Sedona, Arizonans and visitors interested in the current fire status, road closures, evacuations, shelter locations and donations were able to visit www.az211.gov or, for the first time, to call the 2-1-1 call center. Arizona 2-1-1 Online received more than 38,000 visits and the Arizona 2-1-1 Call Center received more than 14,000 calls.

Arizona 2-1-1 Online also provides the public and librarians, caseworkers and other helping professionals throughout Arizona with access to health and human service and emergency response information, as well as referrals to more than 18,000 programs and services at www.az211.gov. Arizona 2-1-1 Online is also a valuable resource for preparedness information. The website posts bulletins on how to prepare yourself, your home and your family for a disaster or community emergency.

Arizona's Strategic Plan for 2-1-1 calls for the phased implementation of 2-1-1. The next step for the program is development of local 2-1-1 call centers serving all Arizonans day to day as well as in times of emergency.

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